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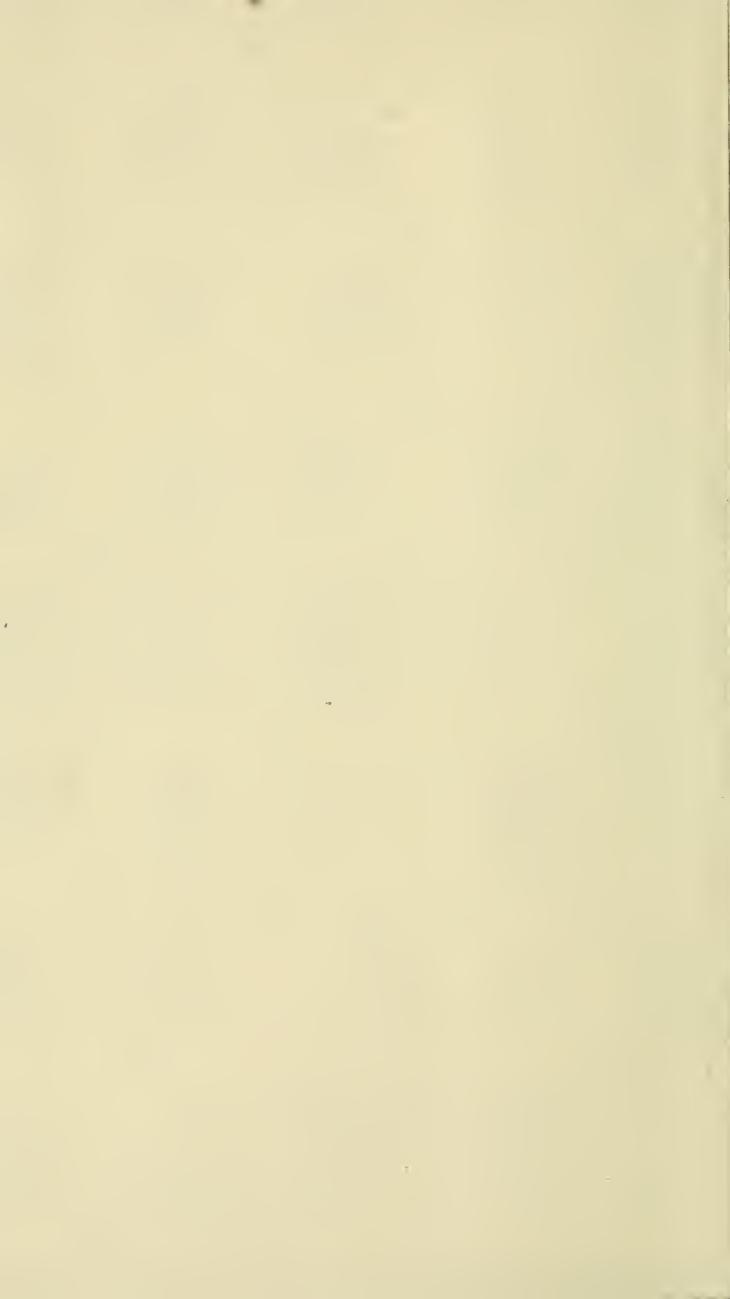
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THE
HARVEST FESTIVAL,

WITH OTHER

POEMS.

BY F. S. HILL

Paulus.....Some Songs too?

Licippus.....Some Songs—but very short ones.

Paulus.....I'll introduce a Grace too,
And in a robe of blue.—*Licippus*, say,
What think you of a Sea-nymph, and a heaven?

Licippus....Why what should she do there, man?
'There's no water.

Paulus.....By th' mass, that's true;—and yet
Methinks a rainbow.....(*musings*.)

BOSTON:

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Preface.

I INTENDED to have made a pretty apology for the publication of this volume, by saying that not trusting to the judgment I had passed upon my own talents, capacity, &c. I had ventured upon this method of ascertaining what opinion others entertained of my productions; and what encouragement would probably be shown to my future effusions. But I was prevented from thus committing myself, by reflecting, in the first place, that the work itself would rise up in judgment against me, and that its publication would certainly imply a *small portion* of confidence in my own powers. Secondly, I came to the conclusion, that it was overweening vanity in me to expect the public to interest themselves enough about a few desultory sketches, to care whether or not the author of them again appeared in print. Thirdly, much as I should like to hear myself spoken of

as having given a very clever little collection to the world, I thought it would be not far short of presumption, for *me* to send out an *avant-courier* to announce the coming of something more important. Thirdly, by imagining the worst to have taken place, I found the chances were ten to one, that if the following poems were altogether condemned, (*Di talem avertite pestem !*) I should, with the utmost obstinacy of disappointment, instantly set about convincing the critics,* of their inability to distinguish trash from poetry.

As for the genuine motives that influenced me to commit my manuscript to the printer's hands, they were, undoubtedly, those which sway the mind of every one who *publishes for the first time* :—a fever to see what are always deemed the out-pourings of inspiration, going into the world in fair print, with a clear type, and a goodly width of margin ; a fever which is generally most wonderfully cooled by the febrifuge of salutary criticism.

F. S. H.

Boston, July, 1826.

* Those flies, (to use an unsavoury similitude I have somewhere met with) who seek all over the fairest body for a sore, and who, if they cannot *find* one, *make* it.

THE

HARVEST FESTIVAL,

WITH OTHER

POEMS.

THE HARVEST FESTIVAL.

The harvest had been gathered in ;—the sun
Sunk to his evening couch, and left the sky
Clear as a burnish'd mirror, save the verge
Where met and blended with the western sea ;—
And there, were folds on folds of brilliant clouds,
Whose shades of crimson and of gold glow'd like
Fragrant gorgeous drapery that decks the shrine
Of Peruvian temple. And the groves
Waved their variegated foliage in the breeze,
Like a proud band of knights, each lifting high
His silken banner that displays his crest
And his armorial ensigns, gaily wrought
By hand of lady fair.

Around the hearth

There sat the culturer and his hardy sons,
Whose cheeks glow'd with the bloom that healthful
toil

Alone can give—and many a sun-burnt youth
And bright-eyed damsel, for it was an eve
Dear to the rustics for its festive rites.

But there was one among the joyous band
Unlike the rest ;—his countenance bespoke
A troubled mind,—his untrimm'd raven locks,
Forgetfulness of ceremonial forms.

Absorb'd in his own thoughts he sat, and scann'd
The torches' flickering blaze, as if events
Of former, happier days were lighted up
By the strong radiance. An unnatural gleam
Went sometimes from his clear blue eye, and then
Melted again into that summer light
Which emanates from hearts all joy and life.

Ye ask what envious cloud could overcast a brow,
A manly brow, like Bertram's. Ye shall hear
The simple story from young Bertram's lips.

The happy group beneath old Albert's roof
Turn'd an attentive ear as thus he spoke :—

Alb. My youthful friends, it would but ill become

Me, over whose grey head so many years
 Have pass'd—or ye, whose days of Spring as yet
 Have brought forth nought but incense-breat
 flowers,

To give indulgence to our gladden'd hearts
 On such an eve as this, until we look
 To HIM above. Together we will join
 To sing our newly-written hymn. Bertram,
 My boy—touch thy pipe lightly as thou canst.

HYMN.

I.

With reverence and with filial love,
 Our Father, we bow down to thee,
 And offer to thy throne above,
 Our warmest gratitude—the free,
 Spontaneous tribute that we owe,
 And that we give with heartfelt glow,
 To THEE, from whom our blessings flow.

II.

The earth her choicest fruitage yields,
 The fount its chrystal stream distils,
 And sweeping o'er the ripen'd fields,
 Our frames the breeze with vigour fills,

Thy hand it is these bounties flings,
 Thy word at which the fountain springs,
 Thy breath that health and gladness brings.

III.

And though of old, on sacred days,
 Thy splendid temples loudly rung
 With solemn anthems to thy praise,
 By sceptred Kings and great ones sung,
 Yet to the *lowly* thou art near,
 And thou wilt turn a listening ear
 Our humble strains of joy to hear.

Alb. Now let your sports proceed.

Emma. Good Sir, you'll stay
 To see our dance ?

Alb. Indeed I will. I love
 To see the innocent mirth of youth, for then
 I think of days when I was wont myself
 To mingle in such pastime. But look out,—
 Who is't that Edgar leads with him ?

Edgar. Albert,
 It is a weary traveller I have ask'd
 To come and rest him 'neath your roof, and taste
 Your cheer.

Alb. A traveller? He is welcome then,
Come—he shall join our cheerful group.

Stranger. Accept,
Kind Sir, a soldier's thanks. Thou wilt not look
For studied speech from one whose days and nights
Have long been spent in martial fields, or on
The ocean's waste.

Bertram. A soldier! thou wilt then
Tell us some tale of battle—and of strife,
Such as may stir the sluggish blood that creeps
Through veins that never throb'd at the loud roar
Of cannon—or the thrilling bugle's notes.
Come—gather round. Delay the dance. Our ears
Shall drink the music of a warrior's tale.

Strang. Now by my soul! the flush upon thy cheek
Is like the soldier's, when he hastes to run
His proud career—Young man hast thou *ne'er* seen
A field of battle?

Bert. Never—but I love
To hear them talk'd of—then I can forget
The load that weighs so heavy on my heart.
See, soldier—see,—our bright-eyed maidens too
Are waiting for thy tale. Wilt thou go on?

Em. Bertram, thou dost forget the soldier needs
Refreshment first.

Alb. Thou crazy boy! Bid thou
 'The pipers tune up quickly. Let the dance
 Go on. What! is the boy bewitch'd at once!
 Delay the dance, indeed! An hour ago,
 Thy brain was full of love-sick phantasies.

Bert. Nay, father—but—

Alb. Hast thou no gallantry?
 Thy friends have all, their partners for the dance,
 And thou hast left the maidens there, to talk
 About, thou know'st not what.

Bert. Nay, father, nay—
 Do not be angry—for in truth I wish'd
 To hear a soldier talk.

Alb. There 'tis again!
 Why at thy age dost think I would have left
 A score of damsels and a dance, 'to hear
 A soldier talk?'—there—hear'st thou not that strain
 At which the merry dance begins?

Bert. Father,
 I go.

(A dance of the villagers.)

Strang. That son of thine, old man,
 Seems strangely sorrowful, at times, for one
 So young.—

Alb. True, stranger. In that jocund group, he
 moves

Like one who dreameth of another sphere.

Strang. Look, look, he smiles at last.

Alb. And yet I think

His heart doth bleed, though his lips wear a smile.

Strang. What! hath affliction's blight touch'd his
young heart?

Alb. Aye—and it never more will bloom—ask not

The cause of me—I do not love to touch

The chords of sorrow's harp—unless to soothe

A sufferer.—His tale is one of love—

Nay, smile not, stranger,—I am old, and thou

Canst see that 'twere not easy me to move

With puling tales of school-boy's love, or songs

Made up of sighs and lamentations loud ;

Yet I do swear, that I have sometimes dropp'd

A tear, when I have thought what my boy *was*,

And look'd at what he *is*. But pshaw! this time

Is not for sad remembrances. Stranger,

Thou eatest sparingly.

Strang. O, I have learn'd

To live on little, and to tell thee true,

I love so well to gaze on youthful sports

And list to music's strains, that I forget

The calls of appetite.

Alb. Yes, it is true

There's pleasure, sometimes, in beholding joy,
Though in it we cannot participate.

Stranger, the dancers there but little think
How soon the envious hours will steal along,
When they, grey-headed sires, and matrons grave,
Shall sit beside the fire, and look upon
A younger generation at their sports.

Strang. And is't not well they do not? Would ye
have

The cup of pure delight that's quaff'd in youth,
Embitter'd by the thought, that they one day
Must drink of sorrow's draught?

Alb. No, I would wish

That they in drinking from that bowl,
More sparkling than the fabled nectar, pour'd
By Ganymede's hand, should caution use,
Nor taste too deeply—so its cheering power
Shall still enliven wintry age's hours,
Shall still exhilarate the mind, when o'er
The faculties, time's frosty veil is spread.

[*The dance is concluded.*]

Strang. That was a merry bout, young friends.

Edg. Indeed

I think it was. But Emma, look—I pray,

What is't that ails your cousin Beatrice' cheek?

Em. Where were your eyes? Did you not see—

Beatrice. Hush, hush,

I do beseech you, Emma.

Em. Nay, coz, nay.

'Twas slyly done—Edgar, dost thou not know

How quick a kiss—nay girl, be still—

How quickly a smart kiss can chase the blood

From red lips to the eye-brows? Beatrice! nay

Gentle coz, dost thou still blush?

Edg. Francisco!

Here, thou deserter—come and try thy skill

In cooling red-hot blushes. Wilt thou not?

Nay then, I'll try myself—hem! she is gone—

Flown from the fowler's net.

Fran. Edgar! come here,

Thou clumsy fowler. Spread thy nets again.

Be thou but wary, and the bird is thine.

[*Catching Beatrice, and kissing her.*]

Beat. Now do not mock me more. If your desire

Prompts you to kissing feats, there's Emma—she,

I know, will not object.

Em. Not I—but then

You shall come humbly, and to him who best

Shall suit my humour in a speech made up

Of wholesome flattery, gilded well—to him
I will capitulate.

Edg.

Bright goddess—

Em.

Tush

Edgar, stand thou aside—that is too coarse.

Thou art not fit to be a lover. What!

Call me a goddess, when so many scores

Are gazing at us! I shall surely blush—

Remember, woman must be deified

In private, for the spell that lifts her up

Above this earthly sphere, breaks and dissolves

When all eyes are upon her, and again

She sinks to the mere mortal. Get thee gone,

Thou hast thy lump of sugar.

Who comes next?

Carlos. A pilgrim bending low before thy shrine
Who, when he meets thy hazel eye, that—

Em.

What!

Call my eyes hazel? Could your gallantry

Suggest no better hue? Did'st ever see

A grey-eyed goddess—why thou might'st as well

Talk of a red-nosed cherub. Hazel eyes!

Call my eyes hazel! they're —hem! are they not

Bertram?

Bert.

Hazel?

Em. No, blue.

Bert. Thou say'st so, coz—

Em. There, Carlos, hear'st thou?

Car. What?

Em. My eyes are blue.

Car. Then I must go?

Em. Be sure you must, and learn,
More courtesy before you greet again
An earthly idol.—Well—dull clods! ye see
I wait for your approach.—Do ye not stir?
Now by the matchless power I have assum'd,
It shall fare ill with ye—What! Bertram here!
Come, bend your iron sinews and go on.

Bert. It is not in the—

Em. Kneel—I command you.

Bert. [*Kneeling.*]

It is not in the lustrous eye,
Though brighter never beam'd on earth,
Not in the forehead arching high,
Nor in soft lips, that oft give birth
To love's sweet accents—that I see
The charm that binds my heart to thee.

It is not in the curls that flow
Around thy alabaster neck,

Nor in the tints, that sometimes glow

With kindling warmth thy cheek to deck :

But more attractive charms I find,

Whose influence radiates from *thy mind*.

Em. [*Aside to Beat.*] He's touch'd the chord that
wins a maiden's heart,

For poetry is Love's own language. Coz,
Observe how a slight scratch will gall him—

[*To Bert.*] Sir,

'Tis very sweet, but I have heard enough—
Indeed more than I well can comprehend.

No matter for the rest ; believe me Sir,

I've heard enough.

Bert. Come soldier she has play'd

Her game of nonsense—we will listen now
To thee.

Beat. [*Aside to Em.*] See how he bites his lip.

Em. Yes,

And snaps his eye-lids, as they were a pair
Of nut crackers.

Beat. Hush, hush—the tale begins.

Strang. It was a summer night, and stretch'd
Upon the cool green grass I lay, and dream'd
Of one, for whose sake then, I thought life worth
The ceaseless care and toil with which I strove,

While passing through my humble path. You look,
 Young friends, upon my furrow'd brow, and cheek,
 As if ye wish'd to ask, could love ere light
 These faded eyes? Yes, it is true—but she
 Of whom I dream'd, was one that an old man
 Loves till the latest throb of being heaves
 His breast—a daughter.—She was beautiful,
 And clung to her old father for support,
 As the frail vine entwines itself around
 Some sturdy tree that long has borne the storm,
 And still is able to resist its force.
 And she was dearer to me, for my wife
 Had long been gather'd to the sepulchre.
 I dream'd my daughter came, and said
 That God had heard her prayer, and that my grave
 Should not be on the bloody field of war,
 But that my last, last resting place, should be
 Beside her mother.

Then the vision fled,
 And the loud cry 'to arms!'—burst on my ear.
 One moment, and I felt my noble steed—
 His broad chest heaving to the warlike noise—
 Straining upon the rein. The sabres rung,
 The bugles sounded, and th' impatient hoof
 Shook the wide plain. Onward we dash'd, until

The distant gleam of helmets and of spears,
 Was like the rippling of a moonlight lake.
 Firmly the foemen sat—and the first shock
 Of our attack, was sudden as the burst
 Of thunder from a clear blue sky. At length
 The foe retreated, and we followed on,
 Fierce as the famish'd vulture, when afar
 She snuffs her prey. They reach'd a little grove,
 And thence a troop of horsemen sallied out,—
 A score or so. The forces of each side
 Were even then—and there we might have had
 A glorious combat,—such as soldiers love—
 Where horse meets horse—and ringing blades are
 heard,
 And sparks leap forth from clashing armour, like
 Swift shooting meteors from the firmament,
 But they—our band—O God!—that soldiers—men
 Should see above them in the sky a host
 Of stars that shine as if they look'd below
 Upon a gallant tournament—O God!
 That they should hear the banners in the air,
 Rending at every onset, and the notes
 That swell out proudly from the bugle's throat,
 Like a young poet's breathing, when he dreams
 Of some unearthly mystery—that they

Should see and hear all this, and *flee*—they fled,
 And when I saw them go, I broke my blade
 And yielded. But my proud young steed went free,
 And bounded to the forest.

On we went,
 Till morning dawn'd—when suddenly, a rush,
 Terrific as an Alpine whirlwind, came—
 I was a prisoner no more ;—A youth,
 A beardless youth, with thirty spears, had swept,
 As if by magic, or a tempest's breath—
 Had swept the hundred foemen from the face
 Of the broad plain. Then, when I bowed my head
 Before the chief—a voice sank to my heart ;
 Its notes went o'er my ear, like the sweet tones
 Of an Æolian harp—I dar'd not lift
 My eyes—the dream—the dream—th' enchantment
 pass'd
 And there *my daughter* stood.

Alb. Thy daughter !

Strang. Yea,
 Was't not strange ?

Alb. Indeed it was most strange—but—
 Most strange indeed—

Bert. Soldier how came she there ?
 Did she go forth with thee, when thou did'st leave

'Thy home and country for the battle field?

Strang. I do not often talk of this—and thou
I know, wilt press no farther, when thou hear'st
That the wild promptings of a brain diseas'd
Impell'd her to put on the soldier's garb,
And seek out me, her father, in disguise.

Em. Poor girl! and what became of her? does she
Still live?

Strang. Yes—and her mind—but Bertram, now
I ask you, in return for my poor tale,
To tell us why deep melancholy sits
So firmly on your brow.

Em. And, if you please,
We'll hear you tell your story in the strain
Of some soft measure, like the form you us'd
Just now—'It is not love, thy fairy form.'

Bert. Well, cousin Emma, you shall hear my tale,
And then laugh at me if you will.
It shall be brief, I will not say how much
I lov'd the object that my eager heart
Clung to—nor tell you of her charms—enough
That I *did* love her;—that hope whisper'd oft
Her fondest tale of bliss, and that my breast
Glow'd with the thought, that when I should return
To my own home, it would be with the pride

Of one who brings a youthful bride, to ask
With him a father's blessing. Rambling at eve,
 With Mary o'er the moon-lit glade, with tears
 She told me of her father's stern decree,
 That she must wed the man by whom he sent
 From a far-distant land his harsh command.
 We parted, and next morn a youth met me,
 And bade me—as my face was delicate,
 Put on a kirtle, and go out to sing
 New songs and ballads. My proud blood rose high—
 But I submitted to the insult:—Yea,
 I bore it, for on him the father's choice,—
 The father of my Mary,—had conferr'd
 The privilege to woo and wed her. Still
 I endur'd his taunts, until at length
 He smote me on the cheek, and call'd me *coward*.
I struck him to the heart, and then like Cain
 I sought for refuge; but before I fled,
 I stood with Mary on a craggy cliff,
 That jutted from the cave where I had hid.
 Our parting words were few, and when I press'd
 Her thobbing bosom to my own,—to take
 A last farewell embrace—God! do I live
 To tell the tale—fiercely there came a bolt
 From the dark cloud above us, a red bolt

And fell'd us both together to the earth,
 This was at evening, and when I awoke,
 The sun look'd from the zenith's point. Despair
 Press'd heavy on my brain—a clod of earth
 Seem'd weighing down my heart. She whom I
 lov'd

Was gone. Yet 'ere she left me, she had cull'd
 Fresh wild-flow'rs from the neighbouring woods and
 strew'd

My body with them, thinking I was dead.
 And then abroad, a tale of a young maid
 With golden tresses and bewilder'd eye,
 Was whisper'd round among the villagers.
 I rav'd and utter'd horrid blasphemies,
 As if to pour out from my lips, the gall—
 The bitterness with which my soul was fill'd,
 Was't strange!—could Heaven no other vengeance
 take

For my rash act?—was't not enough that he—
 He whom I stabb'd, came forth each night, and
 bar'd

His bloody bosom—and display'd the gash
 Just fest'ring o'er with rank corruption—

Edg.

Hold!

Bertram, look to the stranger there—

Alb.

He faints !

Strang. No, no—I'm better now—let me have
air—

How long ago was this, young man?

Bert.

'Tis now

About two years.

Strang. The same—the same—Bertram,
Thy Mary—is—*my daughter.*

A SKETCH.

By this time, night drawing on, and our commander perceiving on which side of the swamp the Indians were lodged, gave orders to cut through the swamp with their swords, that they might the better hem them in. In the morning great slaughter was made among our party, but at length we made head with a great larum of kettle-drums and other instruments, and finally, after cutting off nearly the whole tribe, and burning one hundred and fifty wigwams, we retired.—*Narrative of the Indian wars.*

That dark hair'd warrior—he with piercing eye,
Pale quivering lip, and forehead lifted high,
Had breath'd the Indian spirit—he had lav'd
His limbs in white men's blood, when banners wav'd,
And trumpets sounded, and a foreign band,
Had like a torrent swept the Indian's land.

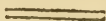
But now—the tribe was wasted, and his soul
Burn'd for revenge, and there was no controul
To the proud stream that through his bosom flow'd,
Nor to the spirit in his eye that glow'd ;

A fire was in his heart, and fiercely burn'd
 Whene'er to view the landscape round, he turn'd.
 His father's bones lie 'neath yon swelling mound—
 The deer, unharm'd, now lightly o'er them bound ;
 In the vast forest that he leaves behind,
 The ashes of his village fill the wind.
 Seest thou yon precipice, whose brow is bare,
 Its parapets projecting roughly ?—there
 He gazes steadfastly—a ghastly smile
 Plays on his trembling lip, while round that pile
 His thoughts are wildly hovering, and well
 What passes in his bosom ye can tell.
 Too strong is the resemblance he can see,
 Between the remnants of his ancestry,
 And those tall crags, that, bleak and desolate
 Seem frowning still, beneath the power of fate.
 That mountain-height rose proudly once, its brow
 Was hung with curling vines—look'd not as now,
 Toward the skies, as if it dar'd once more,
 The vengeance that had smitten it before.
 That height *was* green, and once was gaily crown'd
 With noble oaks whose branches spread around,
 Bending their heads beyond the mountain's side,
 As if to gaze upon the glassy tide,

And see the twilight shadows come and go
In the broad firmament that lay below.
But the red lightning from the stormy heaven
Came hotly forth—the giant trunks were riven ;
The waving tresses that like streamers hung
Around the precipice, and fondly clung
To every rock, blasted and rustling lay,
Till a new tempest hurried them away.

I LOVE SOMETIMES TO TUNE MY SIMPLE LUTE.

Poetry is to me no longer a madness ; it is only a rich and beautiful halo, with which when I please I can invest what I will ; and straitway for my own entertainment, hear music, and smell incense, and feel the touch of soft lips awhile all about me ;—having all my senses illuminated, hallowed and purified with vision, and lustre, and odour—without sensuality.—*Neal*.



I love sometimes to tune my simple lute,
 And, as an echo to its softer strains,
 Give utterance to the thoughts that often rush
 Like an o'erflowing current through my soul.
 What though my name, unknown amid the host
 Of those who crowd around Apollo's shrine,
 Shine not emblazon'd on the rolls of Fame ?
 What though my wandering feet have never trod
 The flowery Parnassus,—nor my lips
 Imbib'd poetic inspiration, from
 The pure Castalian spring ?—still in the hour
 When clouds of disappointment lour around,

And veil the scenes of beauty sketch'd by hope
 In all her rainbow hues, the chord I touch,
 May waken memory from her trance, and soothe
 The throbbing of my heart. Sweet Poesy !
 Thy full outpourings can assuage the breast
 That heaves in tumult. O, if thou appear,—
 Thy loosen'd tresses floating wide, thine eye
 Beaming with an unearthly brightness, then
 The rapt enthusiast in his ecstasy,
 Forgets the chilling atmosphere of earth,
 The selfish heartlessness of those around,
 And thinks he wanders in thy sun-light sphere,
 Holding “high converse” with thy chosen ones.
 Up from the barren heath on which he treads,
 The bloom of the primeval Eden springs ;
 Transparent waters meet him in his path,
 And figures leap out even from the air,
 Cloth'd in light drapery, and beautiful
 As Houris in the Moslem Paradise.

Seek'st thou the spirit who with magic wand
 Can work these wonders? Come then, let us stand
 Here, on the precipice that overhangs
 That everlasting deep. O God ! it is
 A sight too solemn to look out upon,

Unless with reverence for thy majesty,
 And for thy greatness, awe. See how the waves
 Come surging onward—heaving, heaving on,
 As if a consciousness of their own might
 Gave a new impulse to them. See! they strike
 The battlements fix'd by Jehovah's hand,
 And the tremendous roar tells their defeat.
 Look ! look again—a coronal of foam
 White as a snow-wreath, now surmounts the wave
 And sparkles in the sun—and now—'tis gone !

But night comes on : let us begone—we'll climb
 Yon mountain, though it be a toilsome task.
 Let no unhallow'd word pass from thy lips,
 Nor impure thought dwell in thy heart—for now
 We leave the earth and all its vanities
 Below—and come up to a place, that seems
 The threshold of th' Eternal's presence. Hush !
 Here in this region Silence sits supreme,
 And now she slumbers 'neath the canopy
 That darkness spreads around. The sense is pain'd
 By the intensity of stillness, for
 Even the breeze, although its dewy wing
 Bring freshness with its stirring, in its flight
 Is noiseless as the eagle, when he wheels

Alone and undisturb'd in the mid air.
 The sky above looks dark and fathomless,
 Like the great ocean in a troubled dream,
 The stars burn with strange splendour, yet their rays
 Diffuse no light around, but rather seem
 Like orbs that separate the realm of light
 From chaos. 'Tis a fearful spot—like that
 Which David dreamt of, when he spoke of HIM,
 Who maketh darkness his abiding place.

Still shall we on?—Aye, even to yon crags.
 How fearfully Earth's bosom quakes ! It heaves
 With tremulous throbbing, and sends forth deep
 tones,
 Like thunder from a necromantic cave,
 Or nature's groans of agony. Gaze now
 At yonder mighty burst of waters—see—
 The gigantic rocks, that look as firm
 As adamantine pillars, based below
 The centre dark—have yielded, and retir'd
 To make free course for the fierce torrent's plunge,
 As did the waves for Israel's fugitives,
 When the Red Sea was smitten by the rod
 That had been given to Israel's chosen judge.
 The white mist rises from the cataract

In rolling clouds, like the unceasing smoke
 Of incense going to the throne of God,
 And o'er the silvery sheet a rainbow spreads :—
 A brilliant halo round the awful brow
 Of majesty.

Now we will seek the glen
 That blossoms in rich beauty, like the fields
 Of classic Tempe, in their loveliness.
 It is a place meet for the home of those
 Who leave the busy world—and in the pure,—
 The blest communion of each other's hearts,
 Live in their hallow'd intercourse with Him
 Who giveth them the boon of sweet content.
 Of old, such haunts as this, the wood-nymphs sought,
 And when the burning noon look'd hotly down,
 Met with the Naiads of the neighb'ring streams ;
 These blew their wreathed shells,—the others join'd,
 With delicate trumpets made of hollow flowers,
 And fragrance mingled with the blending notes.

Here oft I sit when Eve with silent pace
 Steals on—when only here and there a star
 Emits a doubtful ray, as though it were
 Some gentle spirit coming forth to see
 This earth by summer twilight—then I love

To listen to the music issuing out
In untaught freedom from each gushing fount,
And to the melody among the leaves
Of the green woods. For Fancy then can deem
These sounds the low responsive utterings
From Nature's temple to her worshippers.
Here, thou may'st woo the spirit of Poesy,
Here thou shalt find her, in her gentler moods.

I'VE SEEN THE BLUSH OF EVENING GLOW.

The voice said, cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.

I've seen the blush of evening glow
 Upon the clouds that sail'd above,
 And o'er the lake, that soft hue throw,
 Which lights the burning cheek of love.

I've seen the liquid gems of night
 Lie quivering on some grassy mound,
 Exhaling forth their pearly light,
 Like sparkling jewels strewn around.

I've seen the tendrils of the vine,
 Thickly surround some shady place,
 And o'er the bower its branches twine,
 Like wreaths a victor's brow to grace.

I've seen—when summer showers pass'd by,
 And earth look'd green—the rainbow bend,

And widely o'er the Eastern sky,
Its tinted, graceful arch extend.

I've seen a maiden, with an eye
As lustrous as the opening morn,
And o'er her brow those colours fly,
Which tinge pale flowers at early dawn.

Again I look'd—the evening light
On clouds of gold pour'd its last ray—
The brown leaves rustled—Autumn's blight
Swept by, and wither'd them away.

And see! that bow has vanished too—
Through the dry grass, the rude winds rush;
Fond Beauty's eye of tender blue
Is clos'd—gone is that hectic flush!

ERIE.

It was the hour, when memory loves to cast
 Her vision down the vista of the past,
 And view the shrines at which the heart hath knelt,
 Recall the affection which the heart hath felt ;
 When in the twilight that is round, we find
 Resemblance to the twilight of the mind,
 That state of blissful dreaming, when each tone
 That floats about seems wild as e'er hath flown
 From Fancy's harp to soothe a poet's dream,
 When, as he sleeps, starlight pours down its stream.

The hurrying thoughts that o'er me came,
 Were those of deeds enroll'd by Fame—
 Deeds that are worthy to be told
 In living strains like those of old,
 When the melodious lyre, that long
 Had only join'd the sylvan song,
 By Pindar's hand was boldly swept,
 And notes rung out, that long had slept.

Old Erie lay before me, and I thought
 Of days long past, when in its mirror'd depth
 The red man, only, look'd—when the canoe
 Alone had skimm'd it, and disturb'd its rest ;—
 And when the lilies floating there were never bent
 By prows, that like the noble war-horse come
 In majesty, and heave the foam aside,
 And with a martial presence hasten on.
 The canvass then had never swell'd, nor shook
 Its loose folds to the blast, nor thrown abroad
 Its shadow there—that in the twilight dim,
 Looks like a spirit of the forest, when
 He steals by moonlight o'er the breezy lake,
 His pinions rustling in the light blue air.
 The myriads of serpents then repos'd
 Without disturbance there ; beneath the sun
 They bask'd, and coiling on the clustering leaves,
 In congregated numbers lay outspread.

Old Erie ! thou hast seen our banners stream
 Proudly above thy surface—thou hast curl'd
 Beneath our prows—hast seen the light'ning gleam
 From War's fierce eye, when his red wing unfurl'd.
 Broadly the spreading sails their shadows flung,
 The keels mov'd slowly—sent no rushing sound—

MIDNIGHT.

At midnight, when the winds are playing
On the rejoicing summer deep,
And through the wilderness are straying
While Earth in calmness seems to sleep—
Then nature wears her softest dress,
And smiles in all her loveliness.

O, then 'tis sweet to seek, alone,
Some shadowy grove, or silent cave,
And hear the breezes' plaintive moan,
Or mark the light rebounding wave,
Whose tones like those of chrystal swell,
Or music from a sea-nymph's shell.

And in this lonely, lovely hour,
Beauty her tenderest charms reveals—
There comes a strange, mysterious power
That o'er the raptured spirit steals ;
Then Fancy from her slumber wakes,
From her deep lethargy she breaks.

Then all that meets the eye is bright—
She waves her wand—and round it play

Wide coronals of magic light,

Like foam-curls of the scattering spray ;
 She treads the desert plain—beneath
 Her feet, like Eden blooms the heath.

The gale sweeps through the bending grass,
 And there comes forth a melody,

As when the fairy minstrels pass
 In swiftness o'er the moonlight sky ;
 The forest boughs heave dark and free,
 Like billows on a midnight sea.

The sky above is shining fair—

The host of stars are looking through
 The veil that is extended there,

And shedding down the silver dew,
 That round each flower is clustering,
 Like lustre on the glow-worm's wing—

The blossoms of the wild-wood vine,

Are ting'd with a soft maiden blush,
 And bend, like pilgrim at his shrine,

To listen to the melting gush
 That issues where the fountains ring
 Their clearest notes as forth they spring.

O, come then ! ere the hour hath flown,
The dancing breeze will cool thy brow—
Thy heart will gladden at each tone
That floats around thee—come then now,
Delay no longer, and thy mind
Shall calm delight, and quiet find.

WANDERINGS.

“Oh that I had wings like a dove ! then would I fly away and be at rest.”

Oh, had my lonely spirit pinions swift,
To soar through yon ethereal space, beyond
The reach of mortal view ! Then I would leave
This cheerless region, and afar would seek
That world, where sorrow never dims the eye,
Where memory glances o'er the scenes behind,
And sees around them rainbow hues of joy—
Where o'er the Future, a thin veil is drawn,
Through which mild pleasure beams, inviting on
The spirit, to enjoy a heavenly rest.

Familiar, wearied with the scenes of earth,
Imagination loves to seek that land
Whose scenes are bright with loveliness, and where
Whatever meets the eye, is holy, fair,
And smiling in such purity, as once
Dwelt in the bowers of Paradise. Around,
Rise verdant mountains, o'er whose living green

Full many a rill in sparkling gladness flows.
 Above, celestial beauty sits enthron'd
 Amid bright clouds with purple brilliance ting'd,
 Or in dim twilight, other orbs look forth
 In vestal beauty from their lofty seats,
 And linger in the west, and seem to shine
 With new effulgence, as their parting ray
 They shed, then hasten on their course.
 Rich perfume breathes in every gale, and near,
 Embosom'd in the grove's luxuriance,
 The crystal mirror of the lake appears,
 Where forest, mountain, rock suspended seem.
 Beneath, the coral grows, and spreads its branch,
 Encircling round the Naiads' cool retreat.
 The floating clouds seem rich with melody,
 And music swells from unseen harps and flutes,
 Filling the soul with inspiration sweet ;
 And then it holds communion with the Source
 Of harmony and love—it whispers low
 The notes of adoration, and delights
 In his own temple, at *His* shrine to bend.

 There would my soul inhale the calm delight
 Which hovers round that blessed land, as soft
 As overhanging clouds at noontide hour,
 When upon Summer's bosom, Nature rests.

THE LOVER'S SERENADE.

Light bounds my bark o'er the glistening billow,
 The spray in white coronals flies o'er the prow ;
 The sea-bird rests now on her watery pillow,
 And the young moon discloses her vestal brow.
 O, wake ! love, wake ! for beauty's eye
 In slumber's bondage should not lie,
 While night puts on so bright a dress,
 And nature shines in loveliness.

The willow bends the clear streamlet to meet,
 And its fresh-perfum'd tresses carefully dips ;
 And yon pine-tops are murmuring music, sweet
 As the ardent breathing of love's dewy lips.
 Then wake ! love, wake ! for beauty's eye
 In slumber's bondage should not lie,
 While night puts on so bright a dress,
 And nature smiles in loveliness.

O then while the dark waters gently curl
 Let thy fond lover's bosom with gladness swell,

One look—and my sail I will then unfurl,
While shrin'd in my heart thy dear image shall dwell.

O, wake! love, wake! list to my song,

That winged echo bears along

O wake! the lustre of thine eyes,

Will make the scene a paradise.

THE FAIRY WREATH.

FIRST FAIRY.

Haste ! fairies, haste !
 And bring your flowers,
 For quickly waste
 The star-light hours.

Fairies ! what have ye brought to me
 From forest and lake, and the distant sea ?

SECOND FAIRY.

In yonder bending grove I stray'd,
 Where waving boughs wild music made ;—
 While o'er them play'd the sportive gale,
 They gently rose and slowly fell,
 As a maiden's bosom oft will swell,
 When she listens to a lover's tale.—
 There the eglantine I found,
 Its fragrance breathing all around.

THIRD FAIRY.

In those fair regions of the blest,
 Far, far behind yon sleeping west—

Where dewy evening oft reposes,
 On a couch bestrewn with roses,—
 Where eye of man hath never seen
 The lake's soft blue, the forest's green,
 A tall and slender stem shot up
 In nature's wild-wood bower,
 And when I touch'd its tender cup,
 The little modest flower
 Shrunk, like a form of beauteous mould,
 E'en from a fairy's hand,
 And quickly did its leaves infold,
 Within a circling band,
 But I brought it blushing, on my wing,
 With violets round it clustering.

FOURTH FAIRY.

Beneath a tangled orange grove,
 Through whose dark lattice could be seen
 The glistening dew on leaves of green,
 That seem'd in Fancy's eye
 Gems dropping from yon heavenly crown*
 And flashing in their pathway down
 From the dark, silent sky—
 I pluck'd this flower from a sprite,

* *Corona Borealis.*

Who linger'd breathing words of love,
 Delaying long his midnight flight.

FIFTH FAIRY.

Swifter than Autumn's breezes fly
 Over the pure unclouded sky,
 I cross'd the lightly heaving wave,
 Nor once did I my pinions lave
 In Ocean's cooling tide,
 Till I saw afar the lofty palms
 Extending out their leafy arms,
 Like streamers spreading wide.
 Then I sung a low and mellow strain,
 That woke the smooth and glassy main,
 In midnight silence hush'd ;
 And when the last notes died away,
 The rippling waves began to play,
 As if some fountain gush'd
 In foaming wreaths of dazzling white,
 To catch the sinking moon's last light.
 A nymph rose from the sea,
 Unwreathing from her glossy curls,
 This twisted string of lustrous pearls,
 That I have brought to thee.

SIXTH FAIRY.

I too have culled young flowers, to twine
 Around the fairy-woven wreath,
 More tender than the early vine,—
 Sweet as Arabia's spicy breath,
 When it fills the seaman's gladdening sail,
 And floats along—a perfum'd gale.

SECOND FAIRY.

Why didst thou send us to search the earth,
 For the softest flowers of latest birth?
 Why have delicate gems been brought,
 From the Nereid's cave, and the coral grot?

FIRST FAIRY.

Knowest thou her whose heart is pure,
 As the lily that floats on the stream—
 Whose charms like the eye of Love allure,
 Whose thoughts are chaste as an angel's dream?
 She of the lofty brow, will wear
 The garland we to-night prepare.

SIXTH FAIRY.

Ere we pursue the evening star,
 And haste to the fairy land afar—

While ye weave the wreath for the fair,
Join with me in my simple air.

SONG OF THE FAIRIES.

When round is spread the veil of night,
And Earth lies in a dream,—
When every planet's twinkling light
Plays on the quiet stream—
Then fairies wander from their home,
And through the sky in freedom roam.
We seek the couch where Beauty lies,
Some airy shapes assume,
And when her cheek, a deep blush dyes,
Fan it with dewy plume ;—
The fair one dreams of misty forms,
Ideal Love her bosom warms.
When Care lays down his weary head,
Inviting gentle rest,
If Sleep has from his eyelids fled,
Till then his couch unprest,
Our fairy spell his brow will smooth,
To calm repose his sorrows sooth.
If dark clouds round are hovering,
To hide the moon's bright glance,

The glow-worm lifts her shining wing,
And lights our mystic dance ;
O'er summer's silver-sprinkled mead,
Our sportive revels then we lead.
A wreath for that chaste maid we twine,
Whose pure blood smoothly glides,—
Whose heart is as a holy shrine
Where purity abides ;—
Her lips are unprofan'd—her brow
Shall wear our flowery garland now.

A FRAGMENT.

Methought I stood
 Upon a field where slaughter once had rode
 With reeking scimitar, and plumes that hung
 Flapping upon his helmet, drench'd with blood ;—
 And there were graves, that had been digged
 By soldiers' hands—the turf turned up in haste,
 With blades still hot from battle—and the grass
 Was thick—a heart had gushed on every root,
 And it was fed with clotted gore, until
 It lifted up its tall, rank spires of green,
 Around that place of carnage, marking out
 The spot where desolation's hand had fall'n.
 So where the ruins of some city lie,—
 Destruction's monuments—luxuriantly
 The mantling ivy spreads its leafy arms
 O'er every mouldering shaft—embracing close
 Each fluted column, as it were to hide
 The lone prostration of the beautiful.
 In that unholy place, methought I stood
 In midnight solitude—and one approach'd,

Whose step resounded mid the tombs, as if
 The sheeted dead were troubled—and their sleep
 Disturbed and broken by the stranger's walk.
 He had a princely presence, and his glance
 Might make the boldest cheek grow pale with awe ;
 His brow was that of majesty—and yet
 An unquell'd spirit seem'd at work within—
 A mighty spirit, for that bosom heav'd,
 And there were flashes passing o'er that brow
 Like lightning o'er a marble firmament.
 He trod upon a grave—there was a sound—
 A bursting sound beneath the hollow earth,
 And he who lay there, woke—and rose ;—and yet
 No terror smote that proud one's heart—nor stay'd
 The beating of his pulses, but he gaz'd
 In calmness at the form, who beckon'd him
 Forth from that Golgotha. The spectre led,
 And they toil'd on, in paths that mortal foot
 Till then had never press'd. The cataract,
 That like the wrath of God bore down—was crossed ;
 And when the tempest in its fury came,
 They battled onward—and the strife was like
 The combat of a band of giants, when
 They fight for domination, and put forth,
 Their utmost strength, until their sinews snap,

And the blood rushes like a lava stream.
 That youthful warrior followed still the track
 Of *him* cloth'd in unearthly robes, until
 They reach'd a mountain's base ; then in a voice
 That caus'd my flesh to quake, and the cold sweat
 To stand upon my brow, he bade him mount
 The precipice, and scale the jutting cliff.
 There was a rustling of the panoply
 Which he had on—an outstretch'd arm—and then
 Blue lightning shot across a dome that stood
 Upon that rocky parapet—I saw
 A fiery inscription on the base
 Of that aspiring temple——
 AMBITION———

* * * * * *
 * * * * *

BALLAD.

Yon ancient castle's youthful lord,
 Has, at the Holy Virgin's shrine,
 Unsheath'd his consecrated sword,
 And bends his course for Palestine.

And now is heard the mingled clash
 Of ringing blades, and armour bright,
 And the deep ranks of lances flash
 In the first beams of morning light.

But why amid that plumed band
 Do they not lift his penoncelle?
 Where is that voice of quick command,
 That Edmund's *foemen* know so well?

That voice?—its tones are soften'd now,
 For Love has touch'd young Edmund's heart,
 And there he kneels with unhelm'd brow,
 To plight his faith ere he depart.

To plight his faith to her, who well
 Might be a brave knight's chosen one,—

Whose beauty like a deep-wrought spell
 Could *hold* the heart that it had won.

But see—the parting hour is past,
 Young Edmund spurs his charger on ;
 “ One look sweet Agnes—’tis the last”—
 Away the gallant youth is borne.

Once more his banner bravely floats,
 Once more the neighing steeds rejoice,
 And freely breathes the trumpet’s notes
 Like a wild mountain-spirit’s voice.

They go—they go, right merrily,
 With arms of strength, and *hearts* of mail,
 Light as the widely heaving sea,
 When first it feels the coming gale.

* * * * * *

* * * * *

It was an eve of revelry,
 And brightly beam’d Sir Rowland’s towers,—
 And mirth was there and minstrelsy
 Re-echoing through the festive bowers.

The bard pour’d out his treasur’d lore,
 And sang of love in melting lays ;
 And gaily on the rush-strewn floor
 Light feet tripp’d through the dance’s maze.

But when the pageant troop came in,
 All started—for they heard the tread
 Of mail-clad steeds, and the sharp din,
 As on full gallop off they sped.

And then a maiden's shriek of fright
 Thrill'd through them—and th' exulting shout—
"Agnes is Kenelm's bride to-night,"
 Like a fierce dæmon's voice burst out.

"Mother of God!—Red Kenelm's band!—
 "To horse each knight—what ho! my steed—
 "To him who rescues her, her hand
 "Shall be the guerdon for the deed."

A hundred knights sprang as he spoke,—
 A hundred firm hands grasp'd the rein:—
 But every saddle-girth was broke,
 And every bridle cut in twain.

And on the bold marauders ride,
 They spare not spur—they spare not steed;
 On—on, like victors in their pride,
 Careering at their utmost speed.

Yet fear not, knight, that merry horn,
 Will bring thee joy,—still thy alarm—
 See! see! thy daughter safely borne
 Upon yon chieftain's sinewy arm.

“ My bud of sweetness ! do I feel

“ My daughter’s fond embrace once more !

“ O Holy Mary ! here I kneel,

“ To bless thee for thy saving power.”

“ But who art thou, whose powerful blade

“ Hath seal’d in Kenelm’s blood to night

“ The sacred promise that we made,

“ And won thee this young maid of light?”

The warrior, as the old Knight spake,

Lifted the steel casque from his brow :—

“ Wake Agnes ! from thy trance, awake,

“ *It is thy Edmund calls thee now !*”

TO ISMENIA.

Demipho. I've been to school to learn the alphabet.
I know four letters.

Lysinachus. What are they?

Dem. LOVE. *Plautus.*

—
When at Love's altar first I knelt,
The voice that lur'd me there was thine.
—

My heart was like a quiet lake,
That lies conceal'd by rock and wood,
And love had never dar'd to break
Upon its peaceful solitude.

In calm unbroken rest it lay,
Unmov'd as the old ocean's deep,
Before the winds had learn'd to play
Their new-fledg'd wings to wake its sleep.

But when *thy* thrilling voice was heard,
My conscious heart leap'd at the tone,
As oft Bethesda's fountain stirr'd,
When angels o'er its waves had flown.

Then turn those eyes again on me,—
Brighter were ne'er to mortal giv'n;
Turn—and their rays shall ever be
The star-light of my earthly heav'n.

BATTLE SONG.

The war-horn breathes its loudest note,
 Each glittering lance is in the rest,—
 Proudly the towering banners float,
 And deeply heaves each warrior's breast.

Now like the tempest in its wrath,
 Or like the thund'ring cataract's flood,
 On, on they rush—and track their path
 With many a gallant heart's warm blood.

But who is he yon bleeding Knight,
 Who lies unhelm'd amid the strife,
 Still urging on the deadly fight,
 With the last breath of parting life?

'Tis Rodolph—see!—his mailed hand
 Grasps the foe's banner, stain'd and torn,
 While, as he waves his crimson'd brand,
 His war-cry on the breeze is borne.

“On—on ye knights your squadrons lead,
 “On to the conflict of the brave,—
 “Make ye the victor's wreath your meed,
 “Or the red battle-field your grave.”

FRAGMENT.

* * * * *

Again the minstrel struck his lyre
 And his hurried hand and eye of fire,
 Were enough without his voice to tell
 That the chords were not strung with a lover's spell.
 The tones in the vaulted arch rung round
 Like a battle-trumpet's piercing sound,
 When the routed foemen retiring, yield
 To a chivalric victor the hard fought field,
 And hark ! at that crash from the quivering strings,
 From the festive board each listener springs,
 As though—bursting forth in his fierceness and
 wrath,
 The tempest went by, leaving death in his path.

* * * * *

He ceas'd—but each chieftain's stedfast eye,
 Was proof of the powerful minstrelsy—
 For the Knights at the proud bard silently gaz'd.
 As if by some magic art amaz'd,

Till the charm dissolv'd, as a sigh, long suppress'd
Was deeply heav'd from each gallant breast.

But when the goblet had pass'd around,
Its brim with a sparkling diadem crown'd,
And each grosser feeling was melting away,
Like the dull grey hues at the coming of day,—
Then a delicate prelude was touch'd on the lyre,
As if some young fairy had leap'd on the wire,
And pass'd quickly away with fluttering wing,
And a footstep lighter than that of Spring
When she bids the violet buds awake,
And away from their snowy fetters break.

The notes were hush'd and this was the song
That was borne on, the passing breeze along.

I.

O lady—when the foe is near
With marshal'd ranks in proud display,
And War comes on with hot career,
Clad in his terrible array ;—
When we sound out our first alarm,
And gird us in our panoply,—
To fire my soul, and nerve my arm,
I only ask, *one look from thee.*

II.

When the dark fight is life for life,
And the sharp gleam of shiver'd glaives
Plays fiercely in the battle strife,
Like lightning o'er storm-smitten waves;
When gallant Knights around me bleed,
And fall in combat gloriously—
To cheer me in that hour of need
I only ask, *one prayer for me.*

III.

And when at length the setting sun
Sees the exhausted foemen yield,—
When trumps proclaim the victory won,
And their rent banners sweep the field:—
When hosts come out our band to meet,
With shouts, and pomp, and minstrelsy,—
I'll bring my spoils, and at thy feet
Will only ask, *one smile for me.*

DREAMS.

Mild evening was upon her star-gemm'd throne,
 And scatter'd her refreshing dews around
 Upon the earth—diffusing a new life,
 To the wide fields, and to the lifted brow
 Of many a flower-crown'd eminence, that 'neath
 The brilliant heaven had thirsted all the day.
 The green luxuriance of spring, sparkled
 As if the image of the hosts above
 Were seen reflected in the tall, damp grass—
 And when its spires were bending to the breeze,
 There was a beautiful commotion there,
 A stirring of that intermingled light,
 As twere the tripping of the sandall'd feet
 Of fairies, leading on the quiet mead
 Their mystic revellings.

Musing, I look'd
 At the far distant landscape, tinted round
 With that soft lustre which arrays the dreams
 A youthful poet loves to dwell upon,

And at the glorious canopy above,
 Spread by the hand of God. Remembrances
 Of former days began to gather fast,
 As, when pale twilight melts away, the stars
 Look out, and one by one leap gladly forth,
 Until the silent sky is all alive
 With twinkling rays. Still memory wav'd her wand,
 Disclosing every moment, treasur'd stores,
 Till a dim, strange confusion spread around,
 Like morning mist, that hovers o'er a lake,
 And sleep infus'd her opiate to each sense.
 O, then what visions pass'd before my mind !
 They came like midnight spirits from the tomb,
 Who in sepulchral garments, walk abroad,
 Holding communion with the living, till
 The breath of morning softly blows aside
 The drapery of night. And then, methought
 There was a shaking of the hollow earth,
 And a deep rattling sound, such as came forth
 From the lone valley, when the prophet call'd
 The winds of heaven to breathe the breath of life,
 And animate the slumbering forms, that stood
 In dread array before him.

Then a band

Went by with noiseless tread—among them, one
 Lifted a deep-stain'd banner : the device,
 A mailed Knight, grasping a broken blade,
 His steel-clad breast, pierc'd with a sheeny lance,
 And round the point his heart's blood bubbling out
 Like an o'erflowing fount of crimson wine ;
 His pale and quivering lips, faltering the words
I rest on Glory's couch, the battle field.

Another host approach'd closely enwrap't
 In the habiliments that clothe the dead :—
 Each figure seem'd a shadow passing by,
 And nought but a dim outline could be seen
 Faint as the artist's hurried penciling
 When the imagination is at work.

And then there was a breathing, like the sound
 That issues from a forest when the wind
 With steady, solemn murmuring is there—
 These were the accents that my fancy caught :
*The ruby lip of Beauty hath been press'd
 By other than a lover's kiss—her cheek—
 Corruption's foulest stain hath tarnish'd it,
 And e'en those brilliant orbs, whose fire beam'd out
 Beneath the delicate fringes of her eye*

*Like diamond lustre from a curtain'd shrine,
Lie rayless in the grave.*

I look'd again
With wondering, for standing there I saw
A group in divers attitudes, and yet
All waiting, as if at the Sybil's cave
To catch the inspiration—and at first
I thought them lunatics, but presently
I knew the face of one, whose eye
Shifted about with an impatient glance,
As if he saw strange phantoms in the air,
Invisible to any save himself,
He murmur'd ever and anon, a melody
That flow'd like honey from his lips. And then
He call'd the spirits of the ocean up,
And they obey'd his bidding—coming forth
To tell him of the caverns that lie hid
In the deep sea, among the “coral groves,”
Where none but Nereids ever go, to pluck
The “crimson dulse.” He call'd again: straitway,
The spirits of fresh budding beauty came,
Light spirits of the air—and of the dells.
One of them, sang a strain of a sweet vale,
Where he had lain, listening to hear the stream

Go murmuring on, bathing the roots of flowers,
 And making music in their fine-spun threads.
 A tale of a fair maid another told ;
 How he had watch'd the issuing of a light
 In fitful streams from her pure eyes, and how
 Her form grew more ethereal, and her cheek
 More delicate ; how through its snowy white
 The crimson flush came melting, as the hour
 Approach'd, when her mild spirit would away
 To seek a resting place, more meet than earth
 For one so sweet.

A little further on

There was a goodly grove, and one sat there
 With brow uncover'd, and his bosom bared,
 Enjoying the cool breeze that was among
 "The green and stirring branches." As he look'd
 Upon the scene around him—at the rocks
 O'ergrown with moss—the old uprooted tree
 Stretch'd o'er the brook, and at the rivulet
 Leaping in gladness down the steep—his soul
 Seem'd full of thankfulness to Him who made
 Such quiet haunts for man. Nature, methought,
 Had taught him her own mellow murmurings,
 And in her language, he spake of the groves.

God's earliest temples,—of the worshippers
 That in them first bow'd down in prayer, and built
 Their rustic altars, and upon them heap'd
 The first fruits of the earth—and the first-born
 Of all their flocks. While yet I linger'd near,
 Turning attentive ear to all his words—
 I heard a shout of triumph.—

Looking round

I saw a figure on a craggy cliff,
 Where the keen eagle oft had built her nest.
 The tempest of the North with his dark wings,
 Was hurtling o'er the rocks and from his eyes
 Shooting fierce light—yet this strange mortal stood
 And gaz'd about him calmly, while his hair
 Was streaming loosely in the wind. And when
 The thunder burst, he seiz'd a harp that lay
 Beside him, and he strove to catch the tones,
 And ring them on the chords—at length the strings
 Broke, as he swept them, with a fearful crash,
 Loud as if stricken by a lightning bolt.
 He lifted then a trumpet, and he blew
 The thrilling blast that he had sometime heard,
 When, 'mid the ever-rushing cataract's roar,
 The bugle-note proclaim'd the near approach

Of banner'd armies, follow'd in their course
 By fire-eyed battle coming hotly on,
 Hasting to quench his vampyre thirst in blood,
 And with deep draughts to cool his burning throat.
 But when his wild delirium had pass'd,
 And the tumultuous throbbing of his veins
 Was still, he went and sat him quietly
 Under a leafy canopy, grown up
 Untrimm'd by man ;—beneath it, there were flow'rs
 That blossom'd wildly, wheresoe'er young Spring
 Had trod with naked feet. And then he told
 How all his pulses once beat high with love,—
 And of the holy transport he was in,
 When first he touch'd his lips to the soft lids
 Of opening Beauty ;—when he first had felt
 Her warm breath on his cheek, before his heart
 Had ceas'd to put forth the fresh buds of Hope,—
 Before it had been crush'd, as with the hand
 Of a young giant newly risen in strength.

I wander'd on, methought, until I came
 To one who stood alone, in pensive mood,
 As if he mus'd on happier days, gone by ;—
 When Pleasure yet had only look'd on him
 With laughing eyes, and led him gaily on,

In sunny paths, and lur'd him with her strains
 Of more than Syren sweetness;—ere he yet
 Had clasp'd her eagerly to his warm bosom,
 And shrunk from her cold touch, chill'd to the heart.
 His pallid cheek, and sunken eye bespoke
 A vital withering—and a drying up
 Of life's deep fountain, drop by drop. He strove
 To cheer his sicken'd spirit with day-dreams
 Of the "celestial maid Romance," yet still,
 Amid his tales of Knights with gleaming spears,
 And golden armour,—or of dancing sprites
 Studding their light-wov'n coronals, with gems
 "Stole from the eye-lids of the waking morn,"
 There was full oft a melancholy tinge,
 Like shadows passing o'er a moon-lit brook.

The next that met my view, was one whose face
 Beam'd brightly with the winning smiles of joy.
 He, with uplifted finger, and his head
 Bent downward to the ground, seem'd listening
 For some sweet warblings coming from the Earth,
 Soft as the music of his *Fanny's lips*.
 His eyes were full of frolic and peer'd out
 Upon the groups around him with a glance
 Quick as the nymph *Æglea's*, when she join'd

The laugh at old Silenus, as he lay
 Bound closely in the thicket, where, with wine
 And feasting heated, he had sought for sleep.

Again I turn'd for floating in the air,
 Were tones, rich in their fulness, and their depth ;—
 And he who utter'd them, swept then his lyre,—
 The sleeping spirit of the golden strings,
 Obedient to the touch awoke, and pour'd
 The stream of hallow'd inspiration round.
 My heart was like an altar when the flame
 Devotion's hand has kindled, warmly glows.
 Rapture stole o'er my mind,—I thought myself
 Near “the green hills and vales of Palestine.”
 I saw the shepherds, keeping star-light watch,
 I heard the chorus of the angel song
Peace—peace on earth ; good will to all mankind.
 The theme was chang'd, and like a seraph's voice,
 The hymn of Jesus rose ; the melting strains
 Hover'd awhile upon the balmy gale,
 As though to take, like him, farewell of earth,
 And then ascended to their home, the skies.

I found another, in a hidden place,
 Conning an ancient scroll where was transcribed,
 A legend full of strange sublimity,

And secret mysteries, such as awake
 Feelings of wonder and of awe. The tale
 Was of a fallen spirit, who had lost
 That splendour of the Cherubim,
 Which mortal eyes could never yet endure,
 But still retain'd cherubic power. He saw
 One of the beautiful daughters of the earth,
 And burn'd for her with all a demon's passion—
 Intense, because his heart sought God no more
 And he lov'd *her* alone,—but base, because
 The intercourse of evil ones had giv'n
 A shade of darkness to his soul. He strove
 With vehemence to win her from her God,
 From happiness and heaven, until at length
 HE had compassion,—interpos'd his arm,
 And scourg'd the rebel to his prison gates.

This group seem'd numberless,—and some there were
 Who rav'd most loudly, and they swore that they
 Would heave the earth from her old resting place,
 Scoop oceans up—stop each volcano's mouth,
 And sink the mountains in some horrid cave,
 If *she* would give one smile for all their pains.
 Others were forming projects how to twist
 The moon-beams into necklaces, to deck

Some fair one—or to rob the comet's train
 To twine *mid her dark hair*—or cull the stars
 For spangles to her girdle—or to bring
 The breezes of Arabia, to perfume
 Her bower ;—and one had made a vow
 To mount astride the billows, when the storm
 Was heaving them to heaven, and tear away
 The broad, blue curtain of the sky, because
 Its colour rivall'd his fair Delia's eye.
 And when at length a flashing crown was hung
 Far in the distance, every eye was turn'd,
 And firm intent to win it, seem'd t' impress
 Each mind. But a low breathing in the air,
 Unheard by them, came o'er my list'ning ear :
Ye seek the wreath of Fame :—toil on—toil on ;
When ye are low, perhaps they'll bring its flowers,
And strew them carelessly upon your graves.

PERSIAN SONGS.

THE MAIDEN TO HER LOVER.

Before the winning breeze could steal
 Morn's sprinkled pearl-drops from this rose,
 I cull'd it, that it might reveal
 The tale *my lips* dare not disclose.

 Its leaves of virgin tenderness,
 Where I have press'd a kiss for thee,—
 Its blush of maiden bashfulness,—
 Both tell of love and secrecy.

 For they have bound my flowing curls,
 And told me, that ere eve's mild hour,
 They'll deck me with their gems and pearls,
 To shine the queen of Iran's bower.

 But I will toil and tempest brave,
 And roam the desert *at thy side*,
 And kiss thy feet, and live thy slave,
 Rather than be proud Iran's bride.

THE LOVER'S REPLY.

'Thou bright one !—let thy lover calm

The breast that heaves such throbbing sighs,
And still those quivering lips, whose balm
Is like the breath of Paradise.

For, by thy token-flower, that brought

The seal thy crimson lips impress'd,—
By these thin leaves, with sweetness fraught,
Like shrines where spikenard-blossoms rest ;—

By thy pure eyes, whose diamond glow

Steals through their lashes timidly ;
By thy dark locks, that loosely flow,
In glossy curls, luxuriantly ;—

And by that bosom's snowy light,

Which 'neath the veil swells half-conceal'd,—
As oft through clouds of fleecy white
A heaven of beauty is reveal'd ;—

By these, and by my blade, I swear,

That little blue-vein'd foot of thine
Shall never tread the soft couch, where
The silken tents of Iran shine.

But thou thy Kosru's bride shalt be,

And seek, with him, rich Cashmir's vale ;

There, thou shalt wander, wild and free
 As the young fawn, o'er hill and dale.

There, like the notes of Eden's bowers,*
 Thy strains shall listless Time beguile ;
 There I will gaily pass the hours,
 In the clear sunshine of thy smile.

*Mahomet in speaking of the sweetness of the Persian dialect used
 in his day, said that it would be the language of Paradise.

EPONINA.

Eponina was the wife of Julius Sabinus, a brave and ambitious prince of the Lingones. For the purpose of throwing off the Roman yoke, he excited a rebellion among his countrymen, and at the head of a numerous, but undisciplined army, commenced hostilities against the forces of Vespasian. The emperor was victorious, and Sabinus was compelled for the last nine years of his life, to conceal himself in subterraneous caverns. Here, supported by the exertions, and tender affections of his wife, he dwelt unmolested, until accidentally discovered by the soldiers of Vespasian; when he was carried, in chains, to Rome, where both he and Eponina, after a short confinement, were put to death. Tacitus, in his *Annals*, mentions the name of this heroic woman, with a promise to give in its proper place, a full account of her conjugal fidelity; but that part of the history, in which he probably fulfilled his promise, has not descended to us. Here, however, by a fortunate and singular circumstance, the vacancy in the *Annals* is, in a degree, supplied by a disjointed fragment of Plutarch. From a passage in which Eponina is casually mentioned, we are enabled to glean some of the most interesting circumstances of her life.

Plutarch says, that Vespasian, in ordering the execution of Sabinus and his wife, so far departed from the principles of justice, clemency and magnanimity which had previously guided his actions, as to call down the heaviest vengeance of the gods—alluding to the death of the monarch, and the total extirpation of his family, both of which took place very shortly after he pronounced sentence on Sabinus and Eponina.

With blushes like a newly-waken'd bride,
Morn cometh on with smiles. A mellow glow
'Tinges each sculptur'd arch, each tower, and dome,
And marble-pillar'd temple—and the pride,

The stateliness of Rome is lighted up,
 As if her guardian deities were there,
 Shedding the splendour of their presence round.

And there sits one, who, with an eye intent,
 Has sat for hours beside that dungeon-grate,
 To watch the breaking in the east, and mark
 How the cold pencillings of morn grow red,
 And melt into the kindling warmth that comes
 To usher in the rising sun. She sits,
 Resting her faded cheek upon a hand
 Like veiny marble, delicately carv'd.
 Her parted hair, black as the raven's wing,
 Falls o'er a queen-like brow of paleness—where,
 As in a statue that we look upon,
 Impair'd by Time—perchance by Violence—
 Relics of what it *has been* still remain,
 Enough to show how beautiful it *was*.
 The pride—so deeply settled, and so like
 The Roman matron's in her loftiness,—
 The pride that bends not in adversity,
 Still looks out from that speaking eye,—still curls
 Her thin and bloodless lip. And yet it yields
 When kindlier impulses exert their power ;
 Dissolves, when o'er her comes the thrilling thought,

Of those, who in their years of tenderness,
 Will soon be fatherless—yea, *motherless*.
 She turns to gaze upon a sight, that well
 Might melt the spirit of the unsubdued:—
 A husband, and two bright-hair'd boys lie there,
 Sleeping upon that damp and stony couch,
 In all the quiet of their innocence.
 A tear—a single tear starts 'neath those lids,
 As if it were a solitary drop,
 Gushing from out a fountain long dried up.
 She dashes it away, and in its place
 There beams the light of kindling joy. Perhaps,
 While looking at those intertwining arms,
 She fondly thinks that the bright day *may* come,
 When with the well-knit, sinewy strength of them
 Who rise beneath Oppression's crushing foot,—
 Those hands, so powerless now, will bravely wield
 The avenging falchion, that those lisping tongues—
 Which in their slumber now, are murmuring soft
 The words of tenderness, will proudly ask—
 Aye—at the tyrant's very throne, *demand*
 That blood shall flow *for* blood.

* * * *

The hour at length has come; the tyrant waits
 To see that lion-hearted one, who dared

To sound the stirring call of Liberty,
And lift his hand to battle in her cause.

He comes—and with him, she who kindled first
The flame of Patriotism in his breast.

Backward the crowd of pamper'd nobles press,
As if they feared those giant arms would burst
Their brazen fetters—or that *her* dark eye
Would launch its lightnings at them. There they
stand,

With more than mortal dignity. No taunt
Is heard in all that multitude—no sneer
At fruitless efforts—no one dares to break
Upon the awful silence, while those two,
Look round them with such fearlessness. E'en he,
Who sits amid his guards upon the throne,
Folds close his purple robe, and firmly grasps
The dagger in his bosom hid. At length
He nods. The hesitating guards conduct,
The warrior out.

* * * * *

One solitary note

Comes from the trumpet's throat, and tells of *death* ;—
And at its piercing sound, the assembled host,
Breathe louder, and more freely, as if then
Some heavy weight that had press'd down their hearts

Were suddenly remov'd. It rouses too
 The dreaming monarch from his fearful trance—
 He finds his speech—"Woman!" he loudly cries,
 "What can'st thou say, why thou too should'st not
 know—

The terror of thy traitor husband's death?"
 She turns and speaks with calmness—but the fire
 Sleeps only for a moment in her eye,
 And every breath enkindles it anew,
 "Death has no terror now for me," she says,
 "Like slumber after toil and weariness,
 On the same pillow with my bosom's lord,
 'Twill seem to me. I do not fear death's coming,
 For in earth's caverns I have dwelt for years,
 Where sun, nor moon, nor star e'er shed a ray,—
 Where Death was ever walking, and e'en there
 Have known that happiness which never comes
 To still the throbbings of a tyrant's heart.
 Then bid thy minions strike! and thou shalt see
 More than a Roman's firmness. Thou may'st bind
 These wasted limbs; pluck out these eyes whose
 glance

Thou dar'st not meet, and root out from my throat
 The tongue that terrifies thy coward soul:
 But thou can'st not controul the *spirit*,

Even though it *be* a woman's. Lead me on !
 Boldly I'll lay me on the block, and leave
 The scenes that rise around,—for though they grow
 Brighter and fairer, and more beautiful,
 While I gaze on them for the last, last time,
 Yet by *thy* looking on them, they are all
 Polluted in my sight ; and I will tread
 The path that leads to death, and tread it gladly,
 Proud in the thought that *there* thou hast not been.
 My boys ! one kiss—ye will not hear again
 The accents of a mother's tongue, that oft
 Has breath'd the words of tenderness and love—
 What ! do ye weep at this ?—Do ye forget
 The race from whence ye sprung ?—The hour will
 come,
 When ye must see that tears of blood are shed
 To wet thy father's and thy mother's grave !
 Go ! and the Gods be with ye !—Now lead on !”

* * * *

The axe has fallen !

* * * *

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